

CLASSIFICATION SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

25X1A

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

DATE DISTR. 20 Jun 52

SUBJECT Czechoslovakia Rail Gauges

NO. OF PAGES 2

PLACE ACQUIRED

NO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)

DATE ACQUIRED

SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.

DATE OF IN

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL SECURITY
OF THE UNITED STATES, WITHIN THE MEANING OF TITLE 18, SECTIONS 793
AND 794, OF THE U.S. CODE, AS AMENDED. ITS TRANSMISSION, LEAKAGE,
DISCLOSURE, OR USE IN AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON, IS
PROHIBITED BY LAW. THE REPRODUCTION OR FURTHER DISSEMINATION
IS PROHIBITED BY LAW.

THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

SOURCE

25X1X

1. On 29 Mar 52, The New York Times published an article and a map concerning changes in railroad tracks in Iron Curtain countries. The map indicated that some tracks in Czechoslovakia were being changed and some had already been converted to wide gauge rails. Insofar as Czechoslovakia is concerned, I doubt very much if the information in the article is correct. In 1948, I remember that there had been speculation concerning the conversion of the Czechoslovak railway system to wide gauge rails. Again in 1950-51 there were rumors circulating in the various ministries that the normal gauge rails would be changed to the wider ones; however, I believe that the decision not to change the gauge was not made until sometime in 1950.

2. Towards the end of 1950, various Czech periodicals published articles which praised the Ringhofer - Tatra works in Prague-Smichov for equipment which they had constructed enabling normal railroad cars to travel on a wider rail. In October or November 1950, in the Wilson Station in Prague, I saw such a railroad car as a part of a normal train. The car was a demonstrator with equipment attached which would enable it to travel on a wider rail. A sign on the car read 'trial run' (zkusebni jizda); a group of people on the platform were talking about this innovation. If it had not been for the sign on the car I wouldn't have been able to tell it from any normal car.

3. In addition, I remember that towards the end of 1950 or early 1951 it was announced that direct sleeping car service would operate between Prague and Moscow; however, this did not go into effect, for shortly after, it was necessary to change trains at the Soviet-Czech border at Cierna nad Tisou. Cierna nad Tisou is the main loading and unloading point along the border.

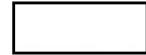
25X1X

CLASSIFICATION SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

STATE	NAVY	AEC	X	DISTRIBUTION						
ARMY	X	AIR	X	FBI	X	ORR	EV			

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION

-2-



25X1A

4, Because of the complicated Czech railway system and the considerable technical obstacles that probably would be encountered in rebuilding tracks in Czechoslovakia, I doubt that such a task will be undertaken in the foreseeable future. In addition, the 'Friendship Railroad' (Trať Družby) in Slovakia and the new addition to the main east-west railroad between Kosice and Bohumin are being built with normal gauge tracks.

-end-

SECRET/SECURITY INFORMATION